

PSC-ED-OS

**Moderator: Steven Hicks
September 1, 2011
12:00 pm CT**

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by.

At this time, all participants are in a listen-only mode. During the question-and-answer session, you may press star 1 on your touchtone phone if you'd like to ask a question.

Today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time.

And I'll be turning the meeting over to Mr. Steven Hicks. You may begin.

Steven Hicks: Thank you.

Good afternoon and good morning. And we apologize for the technical difficulties. But we really appreciate you joining us for the US Departments of Education and Health and Human Services Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Technical Assistance webinar for potential applicants to review technical and logistical aspects of the competition.

During this webinar, the departments will walk state applicants through the components of the application and provide an opportunity for state applicants to ask questions.

On September 13, we will hold a day-long technical assistance workshop to review aspects of the competition in depth, and states will have an opportunity to ask additional questions.

We'll start this presentation with some remarks from Jacqueline Jones, Senior Advisor on Early Learning to the Secretary at the US Department of Education, and then hear from Joan Lombardi, Deputy Assistant Secretary and Inter-Departmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development at the Administration for Children and Families US Department of Health and Human Services.

Jacqueline?

Jacqueline Jones: Thank you, Steven, and good afternoon everyone. Thank you so much for joining us today.

This call is designed for people in the states who have primary responsibility for completing the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application. We know that your plates are very full and we know that this technical assistance workshop is not mandatory, so we're so grateful that you've decided to take the time to join us.

Our goal here is to orient you to how the pieces of the applications fit together so that as you start your work, you will not lose any time.

We'll take as many questions as we have time for today. We'll also make it clear how you can get your questions answered if we run out of time. So think about the questions that you have. And if you have new questions that pop up after this session is over, we'll try to address them.

Next slide?

The day we hope to break down the Notice Inviting Applications and the applications so that you have a better understanding of the following: what you must write to and where you have choices; the basic structure, mechanics of the application; the guidelines given to reviewers for scoring applications and what must be submitted with the application.

At the all-day session on September 13 that Steven mentioned, we will focus more on the details of selection criteria and priorities and how to write a high-quality application.

Next slide?

Because many of you attended the prior stakeholder conference call, we'll skip quickly through the overview of the program and launch into the heart of it. In this call, we will do a big picture orientation of the notice so you know what to look for and where to find it. We will walk you through examples from the application itself, so you can see how the pieces fit together. And we'll end with things to consider as you're putting your work plan together for the next few weeks.

As you can see on this slide, this work is a result of an extraordinary collaboration between the Department of Education and Health and Human Services. And you'll see that today you'll be hearing from many people

who've been integral in the writing of this notice. They're here to present this program to you and a similar group of people will be available to you on September 13.

Next slide?

Man: Yes.

Jacqueline Jones: As all of you know, the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge is a competitive grant program designed to support states to improve the quality of early learning and development programs and increase access to high-quality programs for children with high needs. So improving quality, increasing access, these are the means by which we hope to get to our overarching goal of ensuring that children enter kindergarten ready to succeed. This is a historic opportunity for state teams to come together and focus on the five key levers of change.

So now my colleague, Joan Lombardi, is going to go through more aspects of these programs.

Joan?

Joan Lombardi: Thank you, Jacqueline.

And before I go into the public input process, let me start by saying on behalf of the departments, I just want to welcome everybody to the first webinar. It's so exciting to see the process really get started. We know you've already spent much time reviewing the application, meeting with your colleagues, pulling together data and thinking about the vision for young children and families

living in your states. We hope this webinar will help answer some of your emerging questions and clarify (the material) you've already been reviewing.

The Early Learning Challenge provides important criteria, and Jacqueline said, for improving the quality of services which we hope will lead to success for young children in their early years. Yet we know that the exact road for achieving this change will vary. In many ways, your plan is a roadmap, a set of strategies which will build on past accomplishments and help guide the next steps in (unintelligible) to improve early childhood development.

We hope this process stimulates new thinking, innovation, creativity and a commitment to create a learning community in which we're constantly thinking about how to improve our work and take the next step forward. We want to thank you for your work, the work that you've already done and for the dedication you're demonstrating. We know, as Jacqueline said, the process is time consuming. But regardless of which states are selected, we hope the planning will move you - your state forward and that all children will benefit.

I want to start with a big picture and talk a little bit about the public input process. In order to run a rigorous competition and obligate funds to grantees before December 31, we waived rulemaking on this new program, which means we did not go through the formal public comment process. However, as most of you know, we want an input from the field despite the tight time frame. So through our blog, we encourage all interested parties to submit opinions, ideas, suggestions and comments.

We had two opportunities for input. First, when we announced the Race to the Top -Early Learning Competition, we requested open inputs. And then when we drafted the key policy elements of the Notice, we asked for inputs that were specifically about (this draft) during the first week of July.

We clarified and strengthened the competition based on the nearly 350 comments we received. We were really pleased by the interest in competition and hope that this strong interest translates into strong state team and broad stakeholder engagement.

Based on this feedback, we organized a competition into five key areas of reform critical to improving the quality of early learning and development programs -- Successful State System; High-Quality Accountable Programs; Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children; and a Great Early Childhood Education Workforce; and Measuring Outcomes and Progress. Additionally, based on feedback that the scope was too big, we've made changes that allow states to address some, or if not all of the selection criteria without affecting your scores. So we've provided additional flexibility.

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Before we get into details, let's again review the timeline.

The Notice Inviting Application and the Executive Summary, along with the Budget spreadsheets were all posted on the Race to the Top Web site on August 23 and were published in the Federal Register on August 26. You'll find all of that material posted on the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge page on the Department of Ed Web site, which is located - and you can find that information at the end of this presentation.

As you know, applicants are due October 19. Winners will be announced in December.

In addition to today's webinar, as you heard, we'll be hosting a TA session on September 13. We'll share more details in a moment.

As you know, this grant is four years. So the funds will be (spent) down from 2012 through 2016.

Next slide.

During this process, we want to get information to you as quickly as possible. Be responsive to your questions and make sure that everyone has access to the same information so that we have a level playing field. The level playing field is really important.

We have four venues for providing technical assistance to states. First, we're hosting this webinar to provide an overview of the Notice. And then on - second on September 13, we'll have a scheduled TA workshop. States can join us in person in D.C. in the Department of Education's auditorium or through the digital video conference in the ten HHS regional sites across the countries.

States that have already registered for this session will be receiving information shortly. If you haven't registered yet, please do so by noon tomorrow, September 2, as we will be opening up the extra slots to the public and additional state's team members. Again, please note all of this information will be recorded including today's webinar.

Third, we'll be posting a set of questions and answers on the Web site and updating them as we get new questions. The first round of questions and answers should be out in about a week.

Fourth, you may submit questions via the e-mail to the Race to the Top page. And our staff will provide answers.

I hope everyone understands that for this phase of the competition, we can only answer logistical questions, answer clarifying questions pertaining to the NIA and correct any misconception. We're not yet able to provide one-to-one - we're not able to provide one-to-one support or assistance. We have to answer questions in a public way to ensure that the answers are broad, relevant or made public for all applicants.

Our general methods for doing this (is) through TA sessions like this one and through the frequently asked questions or FAQs. So if we can't give an immediate answer to a general question, please be patient. (Turning) around may not be immediate. So don't save up your questions. Send them in as soon as you can. As always, we welcome your ideas on what we can do to ensure that your questions are answered in a timely fashion.

I also want to acknowledge that there's been such tremendous enthusiasm out there. And there are others out in the field who are eager to provide assistance to states as they complete their applications. So while states can obtain assistance from whatever source they do, we want to make sure that these entities do not necessarily - do not speak for the departments and that the departments do not endorse or sanction any technical assistance (unintelligible) other than those offered the departments. Again, we want to assure a level playing field.

I want to end before I turn this over to Ngozi to tell all of you what an honor it's been to be part of this exciting moment. We are just thrilled with the response. And we wish everyone the very best as you take this journey with us.

So I'm going to turn it over to Ngozi Onunaku.

Ngozi Onunaku: Thanks, Joan.

Before I get started, just a quick note about handling questions and answers. We will be taking questions in two ways -- via the Q&A function of the webinar and via the conference phone lines for those that do not have access to the Web.

For webinar questions, you can find the Q&A function located at the right-hand side of your screen. You may enter and submit your questions at any point during the webinar. They will be answered during the designated Q&A portion of the presentation.

For the conference phone line, at the end of the presentation, an operator will provide instructions. And we'll alternate between the two. We'll answer as many questions as we can today and then use relevant questions to continue developing FAQs.

Please note as Jacqueline and Joan have mentioned that not all questions will be answered today. If you have questions pertaining to the details of selection criteria, please note that we are documenting them and we'll plan to address them on the day-long workshop on September 13. So today we'll be focusing on the logistics and the mechanics of the application.

Shifting gears, let's start then with the look at the sections of the Notice Inviting Application. I'll give you a quick orientation to each section of the Notice.

So let's turn to Slide 10 to begin.

At the top of the slide, you'll see the arrow pointing to the Application Requirement Setting. We want to emphasize that this section is important. It contains basic information about what you must include in your application. We want you to know that what you see here is not the full list of requirements. You will have to read the actual notice for the full content.

On the next slide, which is Slide 11, we've highlighted the Signatures Requirements. We know that you are well aware of the advanced planning it will take to jointly develop the application across multiple agencies in your states. Here, we're pointing out that multiple agencies are required to sign onto the application. So you will need to build in time for this along with getting certification from your state's attorney general. And we'll talk more about this in a few minutes.

So now let's turn to Slide 12.

So now shifting to the Program Requirements, this section describes requirements for states that are awarded RTT-ELC grants. For example, those states that are awarded the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grants must continue to participate in Part C and B, Section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which is IDEA, also the Child Care and Development Fund, which is CCDF, and the new Home Visiting Program. Also states must set aside 400,000 of the grant for technical assistance activities facilitated by the Department of Education and Health and Human Services.

Again, these are just some examples of the program requirements. In other words, what you see here is not the full list of program requirements. Again, you'll have to read the Notice for that.

If you turn with me to Slide 13, we'll look at the Eligibility Requirements. In order to compete for funds at all, each state must meet the eligibility requirements. The first eligibility (unintelligible) that every agency in the state that administers public funds for early learning and development programs has to participate in the state's application or the state cannot apply, and that each such participating state agency has to complete a Memorandum of Understanding, or an MOU, describing its commitments to the state plan.

So on Page 24 of the application, you'll see that you have to fill in the name of each participating state agency, describe which funds and programs it administers. And provide the cross reference to the place in the application where that agency's MOU can be found. And we also want you to note that under the Application Requirements, an authorized representative from all participating state agencies must sign the application, which is found in pages 20 through 21.

Also we want to point out that to meet the second eligibility criteria, the state must have an operational state advisory council that meets the requirements of the Head Start Act. But it need not be a current recipient of the federal ARRA State Advisory Council fund.

Okay. So now onto Priorities on Slide 14. Here you will see that the arrow points to three types of priorities -- Absolute, Competitive and Invitational. Regarding the Absolute Priority, there is only one in this competition. The state must show how it will build a system that improves the quality of early learning and development programs and the school readiness of children with

high needs. We want to point out that applicants do not write a separate response to the Absolute Priority. Instead, they address it as they respond to the selection criteria throughout the application. The reviewers then judge holistically whether or not the state's application meets the Absolute Priority. States much meet the Absolute Priority to be considered for funding.

Let's turn to Slide 15 to discuss the Competitive Preference Priority.

So there are two competitive preference priorities, each worth ten points. These are like extra credit in the competition. So they are worth competitive points.

The first is referred to as Competitive Preference Priority 2 and focuses on including all early learning and development programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. States that wish to address this priority should write to it under Competitive Preference Priority 2 in the application. And you can see Page 72. In this section, states can earn from zero to ten points, depending on the quality of their responses if they choose to write to this priority.

The second is referred to as Competitive Preference Priority 3 and focuses on the implementation of a statewide kindergarten entry assessment. States that wish to address this priority do not write a separate response as they do for Competitive Preference Priority 2. Instead, under Competitive Preference Priority 3 in the application, again which can be found on pages 72 to 73, states indicate whether they believe they currently meet the priority or whether they have written to the priority as part of Selection Criteria E1.

Reviewers then judge the state's response. And states that meet the priority earn ten points. Others receive zero point. In other words, these points, unlike

others in this competition, are earned on an all or nothing basis. So we hope that you see the distinction between these two competitive priorities.

Okay. So let's turn to Slide 16 to discuss the Invitational Priority.

So the Invitational Priorities represent areas that are of particular interest to both secretaries. These do not earn points. However, states may allocate budget resources to these priorities.

If you'll turn to Slide 17, we can turn our attention to the selection criteria.

So the selection criteria are where we'll spend the bulk of our time today. These are the criteria you will write to throughout your application. These earn points.

In this competition, there are two categories of selection criteria. First, there are the Core Areas, A and B. States must also write to and address all criteria under A, Successful States Systems, and B, High-Quality Accountable Programs.

On Slide 18, you'll see that there are three Focused Investment Areas, which are C, Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children, D, a Great Early Learning Workforce, and E, Measuring Outcomes and Progress. These offer states flexibility to develop plans that are customized to meet their specific strengths and needs. States choose which criteria to address within section.

So this covers the overview of the Notice. Now I will hand it over to Jennifer Tschantz who will spend a little more time walking through what's in the selection criteria.

Jennifer?

Jennifer Tschantz: Great. Thanks, Ngozi.

Now on Slide 19, just a little more detail on the selection criteria. So while states do address all the selection criteria and core areas, A and B, they have flexibility about how many and which criteria to address in the Focused Investment Areas. In Section C, states have to address at least two of the four criteria. And in Section D and E, states have to address at least one criterion in each of those.

In the Focused Investment Area, the points are spread evenly across the criteria that the state chooses to address. So states are not disadvantaged or advantaged in the competition based on the number of criteria that they choose to address.

On Slide 20, we'll talk a little bit about the specific selection criterion under A. A is really focused on building successful state systems. And it's about how the state is organized to deliver successfully on its plan. And it includes criteria about the state's track record in early learning, its proposed reform agenda and how all of the agencies across the state will work together to ensure alignment and coordination of their early learning and development programs, and how to budget for this specific grant. States must address all four of these criteria.

Under Section B on Slide 21, this focus here is really about how a tiered quality rating and improvement system, or a TQRIS, will be developed across all of the state's agencies and programs, with the goal of having common

quality definitions and metrics used statewide. Again, states must address all five of these criteria under Section B.

On Slide 22 is Section C, Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children. And it concerns many of the elements covered by program standards -- early learning and development standards; comprehensive assessment systems; health promotion; and family engagement. States must choose at least two of these areas in which additional and in-depth work is needed and focus on those.

Section D on Slide 23 is about developing and supporting the state's early learning or early childhood education workforce. States may choose to work on one or both of these criteria, depending on where it feels the in-depth focus is needed.

Section E on Slide 24 concerns measuring progress and outcomes. Here, too, states may choose to work on one or both of these criteria. The first criterion is about putting a kindergarten entry assessment in place. And if the state writes to this, as Ngozi mentioned, it can earn competitive or extra points.

The second criterion, E2, is about having a strong statewide early learning data system in place.

Now that's a quick broad overview of the selection criteria. And again, we'll talk more about those in a minute and want to remind you that we're going to spend a lot of time on September 13 going in depths on each of these.

On Slide 25, we want to just to alert you about defined terms. Throughout the NIA and the application, there are defined terms. Any time a defined term is used, it is designated by initial capitalization. Here you see a few of the most

frequently used defined terms. All of the defined terms can be found on pages 14 through 19 of the application.

Critical information is included in these definitions. So please spend some time reviewing the definitions. Refer back to them as needed and keep them handy.

On Slide 26, we just wanted to share a few more important pieces. First, we released the point allocation and scoring rubric that reviewers will use to judge applications. This information is in Section 14 of the application, pages 104 through 110.

Second, we released important budget information. You'll find it in Section 8 of the application. Remember that states are organized into four categories based on each state's share of the national population of children birth through 5 from low-income families. We set budget caps for each state ranging from \$50 million to \$100 million.

Now this is really important. States that propose budgets over their budget caps will not be considered for funding. Additionally, as part of state's applications, they have to complete specific budget forms and narratives. And these are all located in Section 8 of the application, together with real specific detailed instructions. And we're going to walk through the whole budget section of the application at the TA workshop on September 13.

Third, in the NIA, you will find an overview of the competition review and selection process, which describes how the competition itself is run. And again that's on Page 82 in the NIA or the Notice Inviting Application.

Finally, to help streamline the process of signing on participating state agencies, we have provided a model MOU, or Memorandum of Understanding, that states may use or modify if they feel it would be helpful. And you can find this in Section 13 of the application.

And we'll hope you'll find some time to become familiar with these different sections.

On Slide 27, kind of back to the selection criteria in the application, remember, most of your application will be responses to the actual selection criteria.

For all selection criteria, there are three parts to keep in mind when you start writing. First, there's a narrative. For every single selection criterion you respond to, you'll have a narrative. While it's mainly pros, you may also include texts, tables, charts or graphs, whatever will ensure clarity.

Second, some criteria also require specific evidence. And we're going to talk more about this in just a minute.

Finally, some criteria require performance measures. And again we're going to share a few examples of what this looks like.

So now I'm going to turn it over to my HHS colleague, Richard Gonzales so he can walk you through these two examples.

Richard Gonzales: Hello everybody. So prior to looking at the first example on Slide 28, it's important to note that each criterion in the application is laid out in the same general structure -- criterion, the instructions and the textbox where you fill in your narrative response.

In the slide above, Example 1B3 is an example of a criterion that follows this simple structure and does not require a specific evidence or performance measures. Your only response for this will be to write a narrative response and optionally to include any other evidence you think is relevant. Feel free to attach additional evidence in the appendix, but reference it in your narrative or the reviewers may not consider it.

On Slide 29, you will note the defined terms. And they are indicated through initial capitalization. Again, remember to refer back to the definition section beginning on Page 14 of the application to make sure you know what is meant by each term.

Slide 30, you will see with the arrow pointing to the first paragraph that following the criterion and in italics, you will find the instructions about what to write. These are the instructions for Criterion B3. Note that for each of the selection criteria under C, D and E, the directions start with the phrase, “If the state chooses to respond to this selection criterion.”

Let’s take a look at Slide 31. After reading the criterion and the instructions related to each criterion, there was a textbox for every criterion. And this is where you start typing. Enter your response directly in the application, which is a standard Microsoft Word document that you can download from the Ed Web site.

Each criterion includes a recommended maximum number of pages. These represent a best guess on our part for about how long your response might be. These are not binding limits. But do remember that from a reviewer’s point of view, clarity matters and brevity will be appreciated.

Shifting our attention back to the criteria, many of the criteria referred to the states submitting a high-quality plan. This is a defined term that we recommend you become very familiar with. Peer reviewers will judge the quality of a state's plan based on this definition. You'll find it on Page 16 and 17 of the application.

As we look at the second example identified on Slide 32, we want to point out varying requests for evidence. Most of the selection criteria go beyond the simple criterion direction's textbox structure and also includes specific evidence a state should address.

Here's an example from Criterion A1 of evidence that is specifically requested. Sometimes the requested evidence is filling in a table that you'll find in the application. Other times, it is something specific the state should describe in the textbox and/or attach in an appendix. If specific evidence is being requested for a criterion, this evidence is listed right after the instructions.

On Page 33 is an example of an evidence table from Criterion A1. We include tables in the application for two reasons. First, it makes it clear to states what information they need to provide. And second, it helps reviewers to see this information displayed consistently across all applications.

The purpose of this particular table is to provide background data about the state's population of children birth through age 5. An applicant would fill in the table and then discuss the data in the narrative as it relates to responding to the criterion.

On Slide 34, the same table appears. And you'll note that most tables have special instructions or additional information requested in the final row as identified where the arrow is pointing.

You will see on Slide 35 that in addition to filling out all of the tables, states still need to respond to the criterion in a narrative as mentioned previously.

Now I'm going to turn the presentation over to Beth Caron who will take us through the remaining slides.

Beth Caron: Thank you, Richard.

Before we begin taking your questions, we want to just point out a couple of things that you'll want to think about as you prepare your application work plan.

On Slide 38 - oh, Slide 36. Sorry. Pardon me. I just lost my page.

Okay, finally, some of the selection criteria include performance measures. The performance measures include goals and annual targets, baseline data and other information. Where the performance measures are required, we've put in tables right into the application. And you can fill those in right in the application. They come just after the narrative boxes.

Reviewers will consider, as part of their evaluation, the extent to which the state has set ambitious yet achievable annual targets for the performance measures. What this means for us, they'll be looking for how you connect your plan in your narrative with your performance measures -- are you being ambitious in what you're attempting to do, and are you also being realistic in proposing a plan that you can achieve, and how do you balance ambition and

achievement thoughtfully and well. These are the questions that reviewers will be asking themselves as they read your responses to the plan criteria.

To help reinforce the seriousness of these questions, we want to remind you that funding events could be triggered or delayed, or even withheld, based on the state's actual performance against annual targets that you set in your application. So consider them carefully.

On Slide 35, you'll see Example 2. Finally, this - in addition to filling out all of the tables, states will still need to be responsive to the criterion in the narrative boxes.

Sorry. Slide - next slide. Okay. Thank you.

Slide 37 - I'm sorry, 38. I've lost my pages people. I'm sorry. It happens every time.

So before we begin taking your questions, we just want to point out a couple of other things to help prepare you as you work on your application plans. Don't forget that in short order, you'll need to determine which agency in your state will be the lead agency. That is the fiscal agent and the grant lead. You'll also need to identify all of the required participating state agencies. This will allow you to start deciding on your core application planning team and your attendee for the TA workshop on September 13. It will also allow you to develop your MOUs and your budgets with your participating state agencies.

We also want you to start thinking about key groups, like community-based organizations, business roundtables, foundations and others in the state who

will be part of your core application planning team. And you'll want to develop a list of questions to bring with you to the TA workshop.

Finally, remember to think about lining up the signatures and certifications that you'll need before you submit your applications. And start working with your budget teams early.

Slide 39, the last step will be submitting your application. You'll be required to submit your application on a CD or a DVD. And this will allow you to organize your information clearly and to provide a definitive and unchangeable version. We recommend that you submit your application in a single searchable PDF file. The submission deadline guidelines provided in Section 15 of the application are clear. But it's worth reiterating that we need to receive the application by October 19th. This is not the date by which your application must be postmarked. It is the date that we must receive it. For this reason, we recommend that you send your application by overnight mail or hand deliver it.

We've also included an application checklist in Section 16 of the application that we hope will be a useful tool to you.

Slide 40, one last bit of information before we turn the floor over to you. We released four documents last week. We know how daunting this probably feels. So please let us give you a quick tour of what you have and where to find more information.

The official regulation is the Notice Inviting Applications, or NIA. The most useful documents are the Application itself and the Executive Summary. These are the two documents I would study first. The Application is the Microsoft Word document that you will fill in. The Executive Summary is an

excerpt from the NIA that includes all of the policy elements in an accessible form -- the Eligibility Requirements, Priorities, the Selection Criteria and the Definitions.

We also released Budget spreadsheets. These are also posted on our Web site. This is a Microsoft Excel workbook that states can use to develop their budget for their RTT-ELT application.

And finally, we are building a frequently asked questions document that we will keep updated as we get questions from you. And remember, we are holding the Technical Assistance workshop for states on September 13. States can join us in person in D.C. in the Department of Education's auditorium or through digital video conferencing in the HHS regional sites.

Many states have already registered for this session and will be receiving more information shortly. If you haven't registered, please do so by noon tomorrow, September 2, as we will be opening up extra slots to the public and additional state team members soon.

Please note that a recording of today's webinar and of the TA session on the 13, along with transcripts from both events, will be posted on the RTT-ELT program Web page at the Department of Education's Web site. The links to the Web site and to the RTT-ELT e-mail address are on this slide, which we will leave up while we take questions.

And with that, we'll be quiet and start listening. We know you have a lot of questions and will certainly have even more coming in the next week as you dig deeper into these documents. So let's take the first question now.

Okay. If you're on the Web site - I'm sorry. If you're accessing on the Web, you can find the Q&A function located on the right-hand side of your screen. You may enter and submit your questions. We've been receiving some throughout, so we'll answer those as soon as we can. And if you're asking via the conference phone line, the operator will provide instructions in a moment. We'll alternate between the phone and the computer.

We'll answer as many questions as we can today. And we'll use relevant questions to continue developing our FAQs.

Operator, can you explain to those on the conference line how they submit questions?

Operator?

Okay. While we wait for the operator to dial in, we'll answer some of the questions that we received already through the chat function.

One of the questions we received is, is the \$400,000 set aside for evaluation per year or over four years? The \$400,000 that's set aside is for a total for four years. But this is a minimum amount and states should feel free to set aside more.

Operator, have you joined us?

Coordinator: If you would like to ask a question, please press star 1 on your touchtone phone. Please unmute your phone and record your first and last name clearly when prompted. To withdraw your question, press star 2.

One moment for our first question.

Jacqueline Jones: Thank you.

We're going to continue with a few questions from the Web. We have a question asking, is the department considering extending the deadlines for states affected by Hurricane Irene? At this time, we have no plans to extend the deadlines.

We have another question asking if we can clarify the last statement on ARRA-funded Advisory Council. The questionnaire says it sounds as though they are not considered operational state advisory council.

So, Ngozi?

Ngozi Onunaku: Sure. So to be eligible to receive funds under the competition, states, as I mentioned, must have an operational state advisory council on Early Care and Education that meets the requirements described in Section 642B(b) of the Head Start Act. And so the exact citation is in the Notice.

So this just simply means that the state advisory council must be designated or established by the governor. It must also include the required membership and also carry out the required activities described in Section 642B(b) of the law.

So to be clear, the state does not have to be a current recipient of federal ARRA State Advisory Council funds to qualify, but again must meet all of the requirements described that I just mentioned.

Jacqueline Jones: Okay. Thank you.

And, Beth, you have another?

Beth Caron: Yes, we got another question from the Web. Does the definition of “participating state agency” include the state advisory council as the state agency? And if you look at the definitions in the application and NIA, you will see that yes, the state advisory council is listed as a participating state agency.

And in an answer to the second part of the question, they would require an MOU with the lead agency.

Jacqueline Jones: Do we have any calls, any questions in?

Beth Caron: Operator, are there any calls on the line?

Coordinator: We have no questions at this time.

Jacqueline Jones: All right, one more from the Web then. Jennifer?

Jennifer Tschantz: This question is, what is the definition of the various stages of implementation -- Minimally, Substantially and Fully Implemented? We did not define these terms. And you can find those terms in the scoring rubric. For those of you that haven't made it to that section yet, that's where you'll find this. And the scoring rubric shows the percent ranges associated with these categories and reviewer's assessment of your responses.

So hopefully that clarifies.

Yes, and we...

Woman: This is a judgment.

Jacqueline Jones: Yes, it's a judgment call on the reviewers - on the side of the reviewers. So we have no intention of defining "minimally," "substantially" and "fully implemented."

Okay? Richard?

Richard Gonzales: Okay. There's a question that asks, do page limit recommendations refer to narrative only? Do they include tables, et cetera? The page limit recommendations are narrative only. And again, the page limit recommendations are recommendations.

Jacqueline Jones: So anyone on the line yet?

Okay. So, Beth, you have another?

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Woman: Okay.

Jacqueline Jones: Ngozi?

Ngozi Onunaku: Okay. So the question was raised, the term "state" is used throughout the guidance. Please further describe the definitions of "state." So by state, we're referring to the 50 states and in addition to District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Jacqueline Jones: Thank you.

And, Jennifer, do you have another?

Jennifer Tschantz: Not quite yet.

Jacqueline Jones: Okay. Hold on. We're (seeing) if we have anyone on the line.

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Jennifer Tschantz: Okay, we had a question on how will responses to invitational priorities be considered? And we just wanted to reiterate, with invitational priority, the departments are signaling our interest in receiving applications that meet the priority. But we do not give an application that meets the invitational preference priority over other applications. So I just wanted to reiterate that part.

Woman: So just to be clear, that means invitational priorities are not scored. But they are in there because you can choose to use your budget...

Woman: Budget.

Woman: ...to support the activities that you put forward in invitational priority.

Jacqueline Jones: Another question we got on the Web is, does the department anticipate conducting oral interviews with the grant finalists? No, this is not part of the process that we're planning. We will not be doing oral interviews with grant finalists.

Coordinator: I'd like to - once again, I'd like to remind you, to ask a question, please press star 1 on your touchtone phone. Please unmute your phone and record your first and last name clearly when prompted. To withdraw your question, press star 2.

And we have one question from (Jody Hardin).

Your line is open.

(Jody Hardin): Thank you. We wanted to go just a little deeper about the definition of “state.” And specifically, are the departments only looking for state public resource contributions to be spelled out and described in the grant or can we also include local and/or private contributions?

Richard Gonzales: I don’t know where the mic is. But yes, you can also - the mic keeps moving. Yes, you can also include - you can include public and private funds - and local funds. Sorry. So basically any funds you can find, you could use.

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Coordinator: Our next question comes from (Eva Murphy).

Your line is open.

(Eva Murphy): Hi. My question is around what kind of leeway does a state have in defining other children as high needs? The definition talks about some specific kids, but also it says that “other children as the state defines them.” So we’re wondering what kind of parameters you put around that.

Ngozi Onunaku: So it’s really up to the state and your - the specifics of your state. And so that’s really up to the states.

(Eva Murphy): Okay. Thank you.

Woman: Okay.

Woman: (Unintelligible).

(Jennifer Park's question)?

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Woman: Yes.

Woman: I think (unintelligible) refers to the narrative.

Ngozi Onunaku: Yes. Yes. So we had another question just asking for clarification on the page number recommendations. And again, the page number recommendations refer to the narrative.

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Ngozi Onunaku: Sure. The specific question was, since the application is 119 pages and the narrative is recommended to be more than 100 pages, what is your suggestion to keep the page limit to 150 pages?

And so I think, you know, our answer is really that the 100 pages refers to...

Woman: Hundred and fifty refers to the...

Ngozi Onunaku: The narrative. Yes, the 150 refers to the narrative. And, you know, there'll be a lot of other additional information that you may want to attach to your application in the form of different attachments.

Woman: And there's also selection criteria, which you can ignore when you're thinking about your page numbers.

Ngozi Onunaku: Right, right. So when you're actually filling in the applications, you don't have to count like what we've already put in there in terms of the selection criteria and our instructions. All of that does not count. But...

Jacqueline Jones: Okay?

Woman: Yes.

Jacqueline Jones: So do we have another - it keeps moving. Another question, if the state receives an award, say \$50 million, is it \$50 million per year for four years or is it \$12.5 million per year for four years?

Woman: So the total grant would be \$50 million in the example that you just gave us. And the amount of money that you would get per year would depend on your budget. It's not necessarily spread equally over the four years. It's spread over the four years in whatever way your budget dictates that that money be spread.

Beth Caron: We also got a question on the Web about modifying the tables to include additional details. And we've put in the tables the information that we're asking you to provide. And there should be space at the bottom in most cases for you to provide additional information. Or there are places where we've actually asked for you to include a little bit of information that's beyond where we've asked you to specify or add additional to describe additional pieces.

Woman: And remember, these are just regular Microsoft Word documents. So you can add rows if you need to. You're welcome to do that to add additional information that you think is relevant for the reviewers.

Steven Hicks: We're going to take the question from (Jorje Lima). Is it possible to participate in the September 13 TA workshop live via the Web or expand the video conference to additional locations? If not, how soon after the workshop will the archive be available on the Web site?

For the September 13 presentation, we have the in-person TA workshop in Washington, D.C. And we're sending that out via video teleconference, not on the Web, to the particular regions. And you should have received information on - for the state teams on how to sign up for those. And we will get that up as soon as possible wherein probably it'll take about three to four days to post that.

And we can take some questions now that we have on the call?

Coordinator: Our first question comes from (Janie Webner).

Your line is open.

(Janie Webner): Hi. We submitted a question online and I don't know that if it's a question that you can answer. But we were asking what is the difference between a tiered rating - quality rating and improvement system and a quality rating improvement system. Does tiered imply that the rated program receives a higher subsidy than non-rated programs?

Woman: So, (Janie), I'd refer you to the definitions.

(Janie Webner): I looked at that.

(Shannon): So, I mean I think what - this is (Shannon). What we mean by that is what's in the definition and only the components that are specifically listed in the definition, which I'm madly turning pages to find for you, are the components that are mandatory to be considered part of it.

(Janie Webner): Okay.

Woman: So if I think here, we were saying that there's going to be multiple levels of quality and multiple levels of program standards specifically, along...

((Crosstalk))

Woman: ...with the other things called out there.

(Janie Webner): So...

Woman: And that...

((Crosstalk))

(Janie Webner): ...it was not about reimbursement rates per se, although you could choose to tie reimbursement rates in any way you want. But it was not about reimbursement rates. It was about tiered levels of quality?

Woman: Thank you.

Woman: But you'll note this support of whatever form that you choose to give them that you think is persuasive to reviewers is one of the things specifically called out in the definitions.

(Janie Webner): Okay. That's what I needed. Thank you.

Woman: Okay.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from (John Paul Bianchi).

Your line is open.

(John Paul Bianchi): Hi. I was wondering if you could elaborate on the executive department's discretion that can be exercised over the panel of peer reviewers. I seem to remember that in one of the TA calls. I can't find in the application; I'm just wondering if that still exists.

Woman: So it is true that the final decision lies with the secretary and that the peer reviewers are making a recommendation to the secretary. Is that the question you were asking?

(John Paul Bianchi): That's the question I'm asking, yes.

Woman: Yes. So that's the way it officially works.

(John Paul Bianchi): Sounds great. Thanks.

Woman: We also received a question on the Web about clarifying the state advisory council as a participating state agency and whether an MOU was required.

And you need an MOU, signed MOU with each participating state agency. So yes, you will need an MOU with the state advisory council.

Woman: So people I think ask even a more specific question. They said that because the council is made of the heads of state agencies, it wasn't that duplicative. So I think the answer is that each state agency is going to have specific work that it has to do under that. And within that framework, each state agency head would sign the MOU for their agency.

On top of it, the state, whatever kind of advisory council you have, also probably has some specific tasks. Those tasks may be greater or lesser in degree. There may be almost no budget money attached or there may be a bunch of budget money attached. Whatever that looks like though, we do want a separate MOU signed also with the state council just so that it's really clear what their role is and how they're going to end up working together to coordinate these activities in an ongoing way to the grant.

((Crosstalk))

Woman: Operator, do we have additional calls on the phone?

Coordinator: We have a question from (Eva Murphy).

Your line is open.

Please check your mute button.

Woman: Caller, are you on mute? We are not hearing you.

There you go.

((Crosstalk))

Woman: Okay.

(Eva Murphy): This is about evidence. A number of the reform areas require that evidence be submitted. And in a couple of areas, for example the family engagement, the evidence - one piece of evidence is standards. When you're looking for those standards, are you looking for what we currently have that may or may not meet all of the requirements? Or are you looking for a set of standards that actually meets all of the requirements?

Woman: Okay. So it seems like there's a recurring question coming back on the state advisory councils. And so the question is, if a state has received ARRA funds for their state advisory council...

((Crosstalk))

Woman: ...the rumor is that the states who received will not be eligible.

((Crosstalk))

Woman: And that is...

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Woman: And to respond, that is not true. So whether you received federal ARRA funds or not, as long as you meet the requirements, the membership requirements, you're designated by the governor or established by the governor and you also meet the activities, the required activities, then you would be eligible.

Woman: Go back to the question that this questionnaire asked.

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Woman: So can you ask your question one more time? I think...

Woman: About the standards.

(Eva Murphy): Okay. Yes, here I am. Can you hear me?

((Crosstalk))

(Eva Murphy): Okay. Several of the areas require standards as evidence; for example, family engagement standards. What I'm wondering is we have standards in that area. They may not meet all of the requirements for those standards that are set out in the application. Should we submit what we have? Are you really looking for a set of standards that meet all of the requirements?

Woman: So the peer reviewers are going to be judging the application - so people don't have to meet everything that's in there. But the peer reviewers are going to be judging the extent to which either your existing standards or if you have a plan to change and adopt the standards, they're going to be judging the plan to do that. So you need to provide to them whatever information will help them understand what your proposal is.

So if you're building on your existing standards and you want to attach them for information, that's fine to do. If what you're proposing to do is different enough from what you've done, that you really want to focus on what your design looks like, that's fine to do. It's up to you. And just know that the reviewers are going to be judging the quality of your plan based on the high-

quality plan rubric or the quality and implementation rubric that's described in the Scoring Rubric section. So you need to look there quickly to see how the reviewers are going to be thinking about the extent to which your plan is high quality.

Does that answer your question?

((Crosstalk))

(Eva Murphy): Yes, thank you.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from (Allyn Wallach).

Your line is open.

(Allyn Wallach): Hi. We have QRIS that's underdevelopment. And I think you might have addressed this question already, but I'm going to ask it anyway. Are we penalized if our system is not in place already? So for instance, one of the criterion - or one of the sections, so B1 is about developing and adopting tiered rating improvement system and either the extent to which we've adopted or we have a plan to develop, yet the evidence is that the tiers meaningfully differentiate levels of quality, which I would assume is looking at how the tiers relate to some external understanding of classroom - or program quality. So are we penalized if we don't have that evidence?

(Shannon): So this is (Shannon) answering your question.

So this is similar to the question that was answered a minute ago about there's a way to describe what you have in place already. And there's a way to describe your high-quality plan, which is a defined term that, as Richard

mentioned, you probably want to become very familiar with. And reviewers will be assigning points based on both, what you have existing already and what you have a high-quality plan to develop, to get to the criteria as we've laid them out.

(Allyn Wallach): So you're saying that we could get fewer points because we don't have something in place already?

Woman: Yes.

(Shannon): Yes.

(Allyn Wallach): Okay, thank you.

Woman: There was a question about whether the \$400,000 set aside that states - that winners of the competition will be required to set aside for TA, whether you'll have to set aside the \$400,000 over the four years in total or whether it's per year of the four years. So the answer to that question is that the \$400,000 would have to be set aside in total, not every year.

Woman: And again, that was a minimum amount. If states want to set aside more, they're free to do that.

There was also a question, I don't think we answered yet, that I saw at one point up there on can you clarify if states will be granted partial points for the Competitive Preference Priority Number 2. And just to clarify, for the Competitive Preference Priority Number 2, it is scored up to ten points.

Woman: (Unintelligible) what that is.

Woman: Oh sorry.

Woman: Right.

Woman: It is the...

Woman: Instead of have it (unintelligible).

Woman: Thank you. Competitive Preference Priority 2 is including all early learning and development programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. And if a state chooses to write to that one, they can earn up to ten points on this.

Woman: So zero to ten points? Anywhere in that range, you could be assigned a score by a reviewer.

Woman: And Competitive Preference Priority 3 is an all or nothing ten points or zero points.

Woman: So there is a difference between the two.

(Shannon): I think - this is (Shannon). I think it's worth mentioning that some of the questions also that we're answering touch on the scoring rubric, which the folks here plan to discuss in great detail with the September 13 all day long workshop because it's quite technical and it will give you a more detailed look at how points are allocated between things you've already done and things you plan to do, between the quality of your plans and the feasibility of implementation.

So I think if you can make it to the 13, it will enhance and deepen your understanding of some of these things about how we're going to weigh different factors or how the peer reviewers, I should say, will weight these factors.

Steve Hicks: Operator, we'll go to the phone line.

Coordinator: Next question comes from (Gail).

Your line is open.

(Gail): Thank you.

In Competitive Preference Priority 2, would you define how broadly you're looking at all early learning and development programs being included in the tiered rating improvement system?

Woman: Yes, I think we're going to - you know, that's really diving into the depths of the priority itself and not along with some of the questions on the specific selection criteria we're going to really dive into on the 13. So we're going to ask you just to hold on that one and we'll come back and cover it on the 13.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from (Jessica Sooter).

Your line is open.

(Jessica Sooter): Hi. Thank you.

My question is also more specific, but perhaps then it's a request for information on the 13. A lot of places where there is talk of evidence, there is

proof of use or documentation (that) - and there isn't clarity in the rubric about what acceptable forms of documentation might include. So I guess I'm requesting that on the 13, there might be the opportunity to talk about examples of suggested documentation or suggested proof since there aren't specific definitions of what documentation or proof might include.

Woman: So you'll find in this competition that there's a lot of places where we'll be telling you that the reviewers are going to use their judgment. And similarly, there's a lot of places where you as applicants are going to use your judgment. And this is one of them. So no, we're not going to put forward examples of what evidence should look like because we think that it could take all different forms that meet the particular needs of the content and the context of your states. And so this is a place where we would just say use your judgment and make sure that whatever you put forward is just clear and understandable for peer reviewers.

(Jessica Sooter): Thank you.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from (Mary Jones).

Your line is open.

(Mary Jones) Hi. I was wondering if you could give us a sense of what level the federal involvement is during the implementation phase. We have some questions from one of our participating agencies about - if you can forecast or project how frequently meetings invited by the Department of Ed may be or participation - levels of participation in the evaluation.

Woman: Yes. We anticipate that there will be, you know, a considerable amount of involvement from the federal government. And we will try to do the best that

we can to bring people together either in person or via technology to share lessons learned, to glean the efforts that are going on.

So we'll definitely be doing a good deal of technical assistance, which also relates to the questions that we've been getting about the use of the technical assistance funds. Those are funds to be used for the technical assistance. That's with the Department of Education and HHS and with the other grantees. It's not technical assistance around helping people in the state.

So I think we can - that's not been clarified. But it's - we don't know exactly how many meetings we'll be having. But we do expect that we'll have, you know, regular meetings and regular conference calls, regular communications with the grantees.

(Mary Jones): Thank you. That's very helpful.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from (Sherry Killens).

Your line is open.

(Sherry Killens): Thank you. I'm so excited about this.

I have two questions. One is, can you give us a sense of - I know there was a struggle about who reviewer should be since so many of us are competing. And it might help us think about what depths and breadths we need in the application when you think about what type of reviewers you're pulling together.

And the second question is that we talked a lot about high-quality, accountable systems. But Jones, since the beginning, you've talked about this

as really being a child development system from home visiting all the way through the second-grade experience. So when you think about a high-quality workforce, some of the language tilts towards (unintelligible) or licensed child care. But there're lots of other members in the workforce that should be considered and also need this kind of depths and breadths of skill.

So if you could speak to the workforce depths and breadths and speak to who the reviewers are, that would be helpful.

Woman: Well I can answer the peer reviewer question. We're soliciting - or we're actually working right now to select peer reviewers who have a breadth of knowledge and information and experience with early learning and development systems and programs across all sectors of early learning and across the age ranges birth through 5 and into kindergarten. And we're looking for people with expertise in all of the various areas and in all of the areas that are addressed in the criterion as well.

Woman: And...

Woman: I do think, however, that it's a good point, like, to just understand your audience and how you need to write to them. So you're right; a lot of the experts are helping states develop their application, which is a fabulous thing. So I think that even though we are definitely looking for people with early childhood expertise, they're likely to have expertise in different areas. That's a little bit all over the map within early childhood.

So I think it's good to not assume a lot of knowledge. People might be experts in one area, but not in another. And you'll need to educate them about all of it. So write to them as if they need to deeply understand what you're trying to

say. And don't necessarily have deep background in every aspect of early childhood.

Woman: You know, and your question about the workforce, I think we're going to wait and have a more in-depth conversation about that on the TA workshop on the 13.

Woman: There's a question about whether or not school-based programs would be included in the quality rating and improvement system. I think we should be clear that we are looking across all sectors of early learning and development. And so we're thinking about Head Start and Child Care and state-funded preschools.

So please look broadly across sectors and think - if you think about the quality rating and improvement system, it is not intended for just one sector. So those programs that are funded by the state that may be in schools, they're certainly right there in what we're thinking about in addition to Child Care and Head Start. So this is across all sectors.

Woman: Operator, do we have any other - no? No other calls on the...

Woman: So somebody asked the question, what do you mean by a statewide longitudinal data system? So that is a defined term. So do take a look in the definitions.

A statewide longitudinal data system is something that the K-12 sector uses. And some K-12 state-level data system's folks are expanding their data system to include children below kindergarten. And so that's why it could be relevant to this particular program. And that's why you'll see it included in

there. But definitely talk to your state education agency people if you don't know what that is because they will.

Woman: We've had a couple of questions about how to address CCDF funding and the ages in the tables, the data tables. We have a question up now and one that was emailed in prior. We see those questions, but we will answer them either as an FAQ or on September 13 because we want to consult with our statisticians about the way that the data is submitted. We know you have ages. But we want to be sure that we answer completely, technically, correctly. So you can expect an answer to those soon.

Woman: So we got a follow-up question on the longitudinal data systems and what if a state does not receive funding for a state longitudinal data system. Actually, all states are required to have state longitudinal data system within the next month, I believe. So I have a feeling that whether or not you have specifically received funding, a lot of the Recovery Act funding (business) and allowable users in a variety of different funding streams that have helped states to get these systems together, so hopefully most states have something together for their K-12 system already.

Woman: Any other questions or anybody - questions in the checkbox or scrolling bar pretty quickly? And if we missed a question that you feel is urgent, you just get into the queue and ask us verbally to make sure that we answer it for you.

Woman: And...

Coordinator: Once again, if you'd like to ask a question, please press star 1 on your touchtone phone.

Woman: And remember, if you come up with questions after this webinar, you can also e-mail them to the mailbox. We will not necessarily be able to immediately reply to those. But we will pull them together and make them in to FAQs, if they're common questions, and provide that information to everyone.

Woman: And your questions that you send in, too, will also help us in forming kind of the content for the 13 as well.

Coordinator: We have a question from (Paul Sugar).

(Paul Sugar): This is...

Coordinator: Your line is open.

(Paul Sugar): ...- thank you. This is relating to the statewide longitudinal data system. And this question came up when I was reviewing the application. It appears to me that, I think the first 12 sections within Part A are direct correlates to that. And I'm wondering if this has become sort of an embedded absolute where if, say, by September 30th, a state does not have all 12 of those sections going that they'll be precluded from moving forward. Or will it just be then the scoring will vary, depending on how much of an implementation they've got within those areas?

Woman: What do you mean by Part A?

(Paul Sugar): Well, Section A under - of the application. Yes.

Woman: And where do you see - under Section A, what are you referring to when you talk about the state longitudinal data systems requiring all 12 elements?

(Paul Sugar): Well, I thought that as we look through those, at least the first 12 of the 13 have a correlation to the areas that are I think required areas in - I'm trying to think of the act that requires the K-12 state longitudinal data. And I apologize that I'm not remembering the name. So I'm wondering, is that going to be something where if a state is not meeting all 12 of those by September, they'll be precluded from moving forward or will it be just scored at an individual basis within those sections?

Woman: So are you referring to the evidence - to the bullets under the evidence for A1?

(Paul Sugar): Yes. Yes. Thank you.

((Crosstalk))

(Paul Sugar): I apologize.

Woman: Oh, oh, oh. I'm sorry. So, no, these are not requirements. The selection criteria in general are places where you write. And this information is what the reviewers will use to judge the response. This is the evidence that the reviewers will find helpful. You do need to fill in the tables. But if you don't have all of the information, you can explain to us or explain to the reviewers why you don't have it and what you do and don't have.

But this is not one of those situations where if you can't fill in every single thing, you're kicked out of the competition. That's not how any of these selection criteria works. You can fill in, you know, to the best of your ability and talk in the narrative about what you've got and what the reviewers ought to conclude from the evidence that you've provided to them. And then they'll score it as they think that based on the scoring criteria.

Woman: And just to expand on that, these bullets are not the same thing as the statewide longitudinal data system components.

Woman: Right. Yes, that was what (unintelligible) first. They're different from that.

Does that make sense?

(Paul Sugar): Thank you.

Woman: Okay.

Coordinator: Are next question comes from (Jonathan Furr).

Your line is open.

(Jonathan Furr): Hi. Yes. This question is specific to Table A1-4 on pages 30 and 31 in the application. And I just wanted to confirm that in this table, when you talk about state funding, that this is specific to only state funding, not local or private funding as we thought might have been implied with the earlier response.

Thank you.

Woman: So we're referring to state funding here. However, in some cases, a state match to CCDF (unintelligible) can come from a variety of sources; in which case that would count as match.

Also I believe as Joan mentioned earlier, these are Word tables. And so for clarity's sake, you could modify and add other things that you would like the reviewers to know.

Woman: But we do mean the state contribution in here as opposed to local or private contribution on this particular...

(Jonathan Furr): Yes.

Woman: ...table.

Is that correct?

Woman: Yes, although...

Woman: Not that people couldn't add another row.

Woman: That's what I was saying. People can add another row...

Woman: Yes. You can add another row and tell us more. But the question here really is, you're correct, about state contributions in these...

((Crosstalk))

(Jonathan Furr): Right. So when - if people choose to add rows, that shouldn't be included in the state - in the total state contribution line. That would be below.

Woman: Right. You should add it...

(Jonathan Furr): Yes.

Woman: ...and then give additional.

Woman: The one exception that -- and we'll make an FAQ on this -- that I'd encourage you to footnote is if you are talking about the state match to CCDF, which is one of the table elements, and some states do use local and private, we may want to ask folks to provide a footnote to describe that because I think states will want to show that to show that they are meeting their match.

Woman: Okay.

Woman: So...

Woman: Yes.

Coordinator: Our next question...

Woman: Yes.

Coordinator: ...comes from (Charlene Russell-Tucker).

Your line is open.

(Charlene Russell-Tucker): Hi. Can you hear me/

Woman: Yes.

Woman: Yes.

(Charlene Russell-Tucker): Okay. Actually I have two questions now that we brought up the longitudinal data system. But I'm going to ask my original question first.

Within Chart A1-4, can you just clarify that we should be using appropriation figures versus expenditure figures in filling up that chart?

((Crosstalk))

Woman: We have a...

Woman: Seven to eleven.

Woman: So we should probably research this a little bit more and put it into an FAQ for you.

(Charlene Russell-Tucker): Okay.

Woman: Because obviously for prior years, you've got actual expenditure figures and for 2011, you might only have appropriation figures. So we need - let us look at that and write an FAQ for you.

(Charlene Russell-Tucker): Okay, great.

And then just quickly my second question, going back to the longitudinal data system question that was just asked, on Page 95 of the application under Program Requirements, it does indicate that the state must have a longitudinal data system that includes those 12 elements.

Woman: Yes. And so the program requirements say that these are the things that anybody who is a grantee has to meet over the course of their grant. And this is consistent with, as we said, the requirements that are in a whole lot of other K-12 applications. The Fiscal Stabilization Funds that was appropriated under the Recovery Act, for example, require this.

So this is just a requirement that is in a number of different education programs. And it's not saying that this is a requirement - this is not an eligibility requirement. This is not something you have to prove to us on the weigh-in. This is basically something that you have to know that over the course of the grant, you need to remain in good standing with your state longitudinal data system. And you keep it up there and keep the elements in their (incurrence).

(Charlene Russell-Tucker): Okay. Thank you very much.

Coordinator: (Manuela Francisco), you may ask your question.

(Eva Murphy): This is actually (Eva Murphy).

(Shannon), I have a question about the state match to CCDF. Are you looking for the match or the total amount of money that we are actually spending if states overmatch and spend more on Child Care than CCDF requires? And I know that (unintelligible) do that. And some of that money is matched to TANF and some other things. Can we still count it here?

(Shannon): So, (Eva), on the first part of the question, we wanted to give the states a chance to demonstrate their commitment. And so that's why you'll notice in italics under there, it talks about exceeded match, right?

(Eva Murphy): Right.

(Shannon): Exceeded met or not met, so that you would have a chance to fully demonstrate the state's commitment.

On the second part of your question, which is more technical, I think it's - what you're asking is if you've used the same match source for both TANF and CCDF, how should you show it? Is that your question?

(Eva Murphy): No. What I'm saying is some of those Child Care dollars, we use to match TANF? Does that matter as we show them here?

(Shannon): I think we want to give an answer that ensures they're not double-counted. So we should go back and think through the whole dynamics of the table and provide an FAQ on it.

(Eva Murphy): Great. Thanks.

(Shannon): So that folks aren't putting them in different places or showing them twice.

((Crosstalk))

(Eva Murphy): Great. Thank you.

Coordinator: At this time, we have no further questions.

Woman: We have time for a couple more questions if there's anybody whose questions - who asked questions in the chat feature and didn't get them answered.

Coordinator: Once again, to ask a question, please press star 1.

We do have some questions.

(Teresa Howie), you may ask your question.

(Teresa Howie): Hi. This is very straight-forward question. And will the reviewers get a color printout of whatever we sent in or will it all be converted to black and white if we've used color?

Woman: Actually, we'll be...

Woman: It's likely to be printing...

Woman: Black and white.

Woman: ...black and white. But they will also get a CD. So if they're looking at it online, they'll see color. But if they're looking at it in their printout, it'll be black and white.

That's very prepared of you to be asking that question. I'm impressed.

Coordinator: (Cathy Grace), you may ask your question.

(Cathy Grace): Hi. Thank you.

I have a couple of questions that I had typed in. And I know you all were trying to do many things at once. Maybe this question has already been answered, but I just want to clarify it. When referring to state funds, that can be inclusive of funds by all entities -- foundations, business, local contributions. And I believe the answer to that was yes. I think Richard said you can find - any dollar you can find is fine, but just put the footnote. Correct?

Man: Right.

Richard Gonzales: It's going to be dependent on each table. So probably...

Man: Yes.

Richard Gonzales: ...what may be the best way to approach this is when we talk on September 13 and we cover each table one by one, we'll be able to clarify what differences might exist from table to table.

(Cathy Grace): Okay. Thank you.

And let me go on with two of the quick questions on funding. When you refer in one of the tables the state-funded pre-K programs, is that excluding programs in public schools that are tuition-based Title I or local support?

Woman: No. Hey, (Cathy). No, we're really looking at those programs that are funded in any way. So state-funded preschool may be a very defined part of money that the state has. So, certainly, if the state is running preschool programs through Title I funds, that's just fine. So we're really looking again as I said across these various sectors, so the ways in which states are pulling together resources, variety of funds to institute state's preschool. So don't think of excluding. Think more in terms of pulling together the various kinds of preschool setting that we have.

(Cathy Grace): Great. Great.

((Crosstalk))

Woman: And you can specify in your table the information that you want the reviewers to know.

Woman: Because we know that states have been doing this in a variety of ways. So we want that to be reflected.

(Cathy Grace): Okay. And this is just a follow-up question. In terms of the consideration given to state dollars, if a total dollar amount versus the percentage of a total state budget, given the fact that some states have larger budgets than others because they have of course perhaps more of wealth or different populations - and that was really just a follow-up question if that could be considered at all in terms of commitment or intent as part of that, is to determine the seriousness of a state's fiscal commitment.

The other - one other question was a clarification on - in the definition of Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. The last piece in there says it includes a process for validating the system. And this - if someone could clarify what the term "validating" means.

Woman: So this is something that we will also talk about on September 13. But we are literally talking about the research process of validation here. So work with your researchers or your evaluation people. And hopefully this will be meaningful to them.

((Crosstalk))

Woman: That's the sense in which (unintelligible) validating.

(Cathy Grace): In terms of the validation and how it was constructed or ongoing validation as to just meeting its goals or both?

Jacqueline Jones: This is Jacqueline again.

You know, we will go into great detail on this on the 13. So think about a tiered quality rating and improvement system and making sure that there is a differentiation across these tiers, because we want to make sure that these tiers are very different and that they really do define levels of quality.

So we'll be talking a lot more about that on the 13, okay?

(Cathy Grace): Okay. Okay, thank you all. Thanks.

Coordinator: (Cathy Thornburg), you may ask your question.

Woman: (Unintelligible).

(Cathy Thornburg): Good afternoon.

When I look at some of the information about the QRIS, it includes Part C I believe in one of the tables. Are you really thinking that QRIS would be part of Part C or only if those young children are in community-based program?

Woman: So if you look at the - and I believe it's under the definition of Program Standards. And we can look more closely at that. But I think - I know we talked somewhere about as it's appropriate, so in developing your program standards for all early learning and development programs in the state and the extent to which, you know, they are appropriate for the Part C program and other home-based programs.

So we'll get more specific information on that and plan to talk more about that on the 13.

(Cathy Thornburg): Okay. Thank you very much.

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Coordinator: At this time, we have no further questions.

Woman: So why don't we just give it one or two more minutes and see whether anybody else has a final question. Use star 1 if you do.

And otherwise, we will see you on the 13.

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Woman: We have a new one on the bottom there. Wait. We have a new one at the bottom.

Woman: New one in the bottom.

Woman: (Katy).

((Crosstalk))

Woman: (Katy), there's a new one at the bottom.

Woman: Okay.

Woman: No.

Woman: So we don't have anymore questions.

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Woman: Yes.

((Crosstalk))

Coordinator: We do have a question.

Woman: Yes, (unintelligible).

Coordinator: (Valerie Van Baren), you may ask your question.

(Valerie Van Baren): I was just wondering in terms of family engagement, how heavily does this weigh in terms of the development and the implementation and monitoring of the grant project?

Richard Gonzales: (Valerie), could you clarify your question? I'm not quite sure how to answer it because I'm not sure what you're getting to.

(Valerie Van Baren): Okay. So in terms of families being engaged in the process, how heavily does this weigh in terms of the development of the grant, the implementation of the grant and the monitoring of the grant?

Richard Gonzales: You're talking about family engagement as it pertains to actually developing the actual grant itself and then ongoing monitoring of what you write in the grant?

(Valerie Van Baren): And as well as implementation of the grant.

Richard Gonzales: So, okay, so let me try this. I think each state would determine to what extent the participant - who the participants would be, who would help in the

development of the writing and the monitoring. I think states have different ways of doing that. Some states have - already have processes in place that involve parents and families in review processes, et cetera.

I think the whole emphasis here on the family engagement within the actual application is to talk about standards for family engagement, how you encourage families to get engaged in the entire child development, child learning, child quality process.

And we will talk more about family engagement specifically as it talks to leveraging resources and supporting families throughout the implementation of your grant. But as it goes to the writing of it or the monitoring of it, I think each state will determine that for themselves.

(Valerie Van Baren): Okay. Thank you.

Woman: You know, it's worth noting, however, that in the Section A3 around Aligning Coordinating Early Learning and Development, when we talk about describing how the state will involve representatives, we include parents and families - including parents and families of children with high needs specifically in there. We've called them out, recognizing that that's one of the stakeholders that - or, you know, that we'd recommend you describe how you've involved them all along.

(Valerie Van Baren): Thank you.

Richard Gonzales: So just to add to that, it's important to keep in mind then as you're looking at your particular state the various stakeholders within that state. So whether that'd be parents, whether that'd be tribes, whether that'd be home visiting -- I've seen individual questions that had spoken to specific things -- you're

going to want to think about who are the stakeholders in our state who are going to be affected by the grant that we are writing, and is there a way to incorporate them in the planning and development and implementation.

Woman: Okay. So we don't have anymore folks on line to ask a question. We want to thank you so much for joining us this afternoon. Remember, on the 13, we'll have an all-day session and we'll really go into great detail around selection criteria and all the other aspects of the competition. So good luck, folks, and we'll see you on the 13.

Thanks so much for joining us.

END